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Million-dollar library budget cut hinders resource access, burdens librarians

By CATHERINE MCLAUGHLIN
Staff Writer

The Middlebury College Libraries had its non-personnel budget cut by nearly a third for the 2021 fiscal year, resulting in reduced or delayed access to databases, journals and books, as well as an increasing reliance on interlibrary loan (ILL).

This cutback is part of a larger plan to reduce spending in Academic Affairs departments by a third, with the goal of balancing Middlebury's budget.

As a result of extensive library budget cuts, students and faculty have lost access to — or face new challenges in accessing — needed research materials, and librarians have shouldered the burden of managing the fallout.

The budget for fiscal year 2021 is $2,384,502, compared to the budget of $3,404,537 for fiscal year 2021 — a decrease of more than a million dollars. Dean of the Library Michael Roy says that this cut compounds increasing costs due to cost inflation, with the price of library materials typically rising

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LOCAL

VA partners with Middlebury for vaccination clinic

By BECCA AMEN
Local Editor

The White River Junction Veterans Affairs (VA) Healthcare System has organized a vaccination clinic in partnership with the college that will take place on Saturday, April 10. The clinic will be hosted at the college's athletics complex, where vaccines will be available to veterans and employees of the Department of Homeland Security.

The health care system, which provides services to veterans in Vermont and the adjoining counties of New Hampshire, has hosted vaccine clinics for veterans at a few locations throughout Vermont since the state's vaccine rollout picked up in early March. Past clinics have offered the Moderna vaccine, which is administered as a series of two doses that are optimally given four weeks apart, creating the need for a second follow-up clinic. At Middlebury, however, the upcoming clinic will distribute the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, which is administered as a single shot.

Bringing the series of clinics to Middlebury allows for increased and simplified access to the vaccine for eligible groups due to its central location in western Vermont.

"Partnerships within our communities across Vermont and New Hampshire are the key components in our vaccination deployment," said Dr. Becky Rhoads, acting director for White River Junction VA Healthcare System "Each large vaccination clinic we are able to offer is one step closer to creating safe communities across our region."

President Laurie Patton also commented on the partnership of the college with the VA health care system.

Continued online at middleburycampus.com

SPRING SPORTS PREVIEWS

COURTESY OF MIDDLEBURY ATHLETICS

Head coach Mike Leonard is gearing up for his fifth season at the helm of the men's baseball team. The team will field a squad of 15 players this spring, consisting of 11 first-year players and four sophomores — all underclassmen — as opposed to last year's team of 34 players.

COURTESY OF MIDDLEBURY ATHLETICS

Few teams have faced the brunt of the pandemic more than the women's track and field team, one of the largest squads at Middlebury. However, after the cancellation of the winter indoor season, the team is gearing up for their first formal competition since the winter of 2019–2020. There will be three meets this spring, beginning with a home meet against SUNY Potsdam and Union College on May 1. Then, the team will host Hamilton on May 8, and close their season at Williams on May 15.

COURTESY OF MIDDLEBURY ATHLETICS

Jacqueline Slinkard '24 of women's golf watches her shot in practice last fall. The team hopes to build on a strong fall 2019 season in which they finished in the top three at all five of their tournaments, including a first place finish at their home meet at Ralph Myhre.

COURTESY OF MIDDLEBURY ATHLETICS

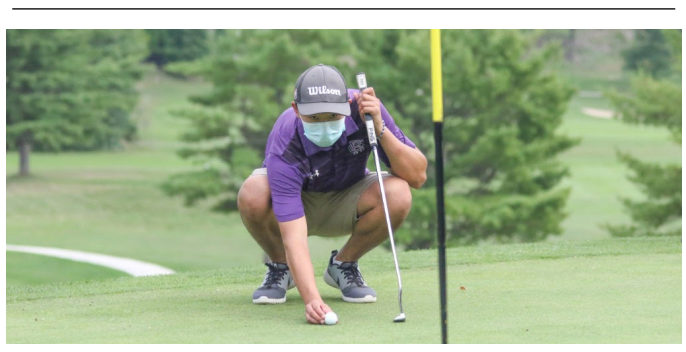
Matt Durst '21 of men's track and field team sprints in the Peterson Athletic complex last fall. The team will have three meets this spring, including a home meet against Hamilton on May 8 and an away meet at Williams on May 15.

BENJY RENTON/THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS

The first team from Middlebury to officially compete this semester, the softball team enters the season confident. They opened their 14-game spring season at home on Saturday with a victory against Tufts.

COURTESY OF BRINLEA LA BARGE

Only seven of 11 women's tennis players are on campus this semester, but the team is still confident and eager ahead of their season opener. The season opens with back-to-back away trips against Hamilton and Wesleyan, respectively, and then closes with two home matches against Amherst and Williams.



COURTESY OF MIDDLEBURY ATHLETICS

Derek Ban '24 of the men's golf team eyes up a put during practice this fall. The Panthers will be in action five times this spring, starting with the Hamilton Invitational this Saturday and concluding with the Middlebury Spring Invitational on May 8. The team's main target this season is to win their ninth NESCAC Championship, a title they last won in the 2015–16 season.

ARTS & CULTURE

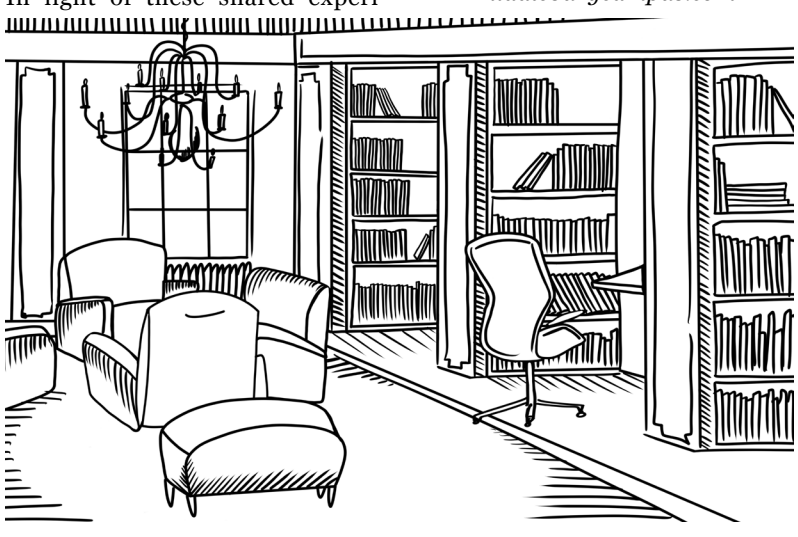
Where to find students in their study habitats

By EDYTH MOLDOW
Staff Writer

It's midterm season again... but isn't it always? Nevertheless, it's time to hunker down and do what we're all here to do: study. Given the pandemic, the combination of completely remote, hybrid-flex, and in-person classes has been perplexing to navigate. We have had to completely rethink how and where we wish to learn: from home or on campus, online or in-person. In recalculating which mode of study works best, we may be lacking inspiration for how to spark our intellectual curiosity outside of the classroom.

A large part of how we perform in classes depends on how well we can prepare ourselves in hazily-defined free time. Maybe you find that you spend more time in your room so that you can study without a mask on. Maybe you find it difficult to focus at all given in this stressful time. Or perhaps you're simply tired of going to the same spot in the library and want to spice up your study plans. In light of these shared experiences, some students have come to the rescue with fresh locations on campus for you to reignite your love of learning.

Continued online at middleburycampus.com



PIA CONTRERAS

LOCAL

Gov. Scott responds to criticism of BIPOC vaccination policy

By LUCY TOWNEND
Senior Local Editor

Gov. Phil Scott responded to criticism of his decision to prioritize Vermonters of color in a press release on April 5, calling the attacks "vitriolic and inappropriate."

"Unfortunately, the legacy of racism in America, and in Vermont, still drives a lot of anger and fear," Scott said. The attacks were in response to the new vaccination eligibility group created for BIPOC residents that Scott implemented on April 1.

Hundreds of messages against the policy had been received by health officials and Scott's office, although no threats against the health department have been recorded, Scott's press secretary Jason Maulucci told VTDigger.

Several conservative politicians and media personalities also expressed their discontent publicly on social media. "This is blatantly racist," U.S. Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene said in a tweet quoting Gov. Scott's April 1 announcement.

Similarly, alt-right political activist Jack Posobiec called

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LOCAL

Why Vermont adopted its BIPOC vaccination strategy

By CHARLOTTE GEHRING & JACK SUMMERSBY
Contributing Writer & Local Editor

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Similarly, alt-right political activist Jack Posobiec called Gov. Scott's statement "a felony."

"Yuck," conservative commentator Allie Beth Stuckey tweeted in response to Gov. Scott's announcement.

In his press release, Gov. Scott emphasized that the policy was a response to the lagging vaccination rates of BIPOC Vermonters, as well as the increased Covid-19 prevalence and hospitaliza-

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ARTS & CULTURE

Lessons from a Life Lived: Playwright J.E. Franklin offers advice to a J-Term Class

By RYAN KIRBY

WRMC Radio Roundup: A Sonic Study

By THE WRMC EXEC BOARD

OPINION

Vaccination should not come through exploitation

By THE EDITORIAL BOARD

The virus doesn't care where you're from

By CONCERNED STUDENTS OF MIDDLEBURY

SPORTS

Siefer's Scoop Episode 16: Men's golf captains Jordan Bessalel '21 and John Mikus '21

By BLAISE SIEFER

Middlebury Union High School athletics adapt in Covid-defined year

By PIPER BRADY